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# Speakers

OF THE NATIONAL ENERGY CONFERENCE 2023





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# Opening Session



L-Università ta' Malta  
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**Mr. Manuel Sapiano**  
CEO, The Energy and Water Agency

Manuel Sapiano is the Chief Executive Officer of the Energy and Water Agency (EWA) within Malta's Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Enterprise (MEEE). In this role, he coordinates a team of experts with responsibilities for the formulation, evaluation, monitoring, and implementation of national policies concerning the use of energy and water in a sustainable manner and the formulation of plans to meet National and EU energy and water resources management targets.

He also coordinates EWA's identification of and participation in research and development initiatives in the energy and water sectors, mainly focusing on issues such as the water and energy demand management and use efficiency, renewable energies, groundwater resources management and policy assessment and formulation.

Mr Sapiano is a hydrogeologist, with specific specialisation in island and coastal hydrology.



## **Mr. Nikolaos Kontanakis**

**Energy Efficient Unit, DG ENER, European  
Commission**

Nikolaos Kontinakis works in the Energy Efficiency Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER). The mission of the Unit is to deliver on the Green Deal objective to prioritise energy efficiency by developing and implementing the necessary legislation and by supporting the mainstreaming of energy efficiency investments under the European Green Deal Investment Plan. Nikolaos works with the energy efficiency targets, the nexus between energy efficiency and ICT, particularly data centres, as well as the 'Energy Efficiency First' principle. For more than 20 years, he has worked for the development and implementation of policies and projects in the areas of the twin green & digital transition (energy, climate, and ICT), and the sustainable development of cities and regions.



## **Hon. Miriam Dalli**

**Minister for the Environment,  
Energy and Enterprise**

Minister Miriam Dalli strongly advocates the need to align the Maltese Islands' economic prosperity with environmental sustainability and an enhanced quality of life. Her priorities include achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, create more green spaces, and advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Minister Miriam Dalli promotes sustainable business practices and supports innovative enterprises. Additionally, Dalli is advancing Malta's energy security and sustainability through offshore renewables and European energy connections.



## **Dr. Jacquelin Cochran**

**Director, The Grid Planning and  
Analysis Centre**

Jaquelin Cochran, Ph.D., is the director of the Grid Planning and Analysis Center at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, where she has worked for 14 years. Dr. Cochran's research has focused on the evolution of the power grid with high deployment of renewable energy. She recently led the Los Angeles 100% Renewable Energy Study and a portfolio of analyses about India's power system. Before joining NREL, Dr. Cochran was an Assistant Professor of Natural Resource Management with KIMEP University in Almaty, Kazakhstan. She also served as a Peace Corps volunteer for two years with the Polish Foundation for Energy Efficiency (FEWE) in Krakow. She holds a Ph.D. and M.A. from the Energy & Resources Group at the University of California at Berkeley.



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# Session 1

**Financing decarbonisation of local industry**



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***Moderator:***  
**Perit David Xuereb**  
Chairman, MCESD and Malta  
ESG Alliance

David Xuereb is an architect and structural engineer and led built-environment teams in many parts of the world for over 30 years. He currently supports a strong, tangible and committed decarbonized economic transition in Malta through ESG principles that are impactful and exponential, regenerative and distributive. David lectures at the University of Malta, presided over the Malta Chamber of Commerce between 2019 and 2021 and currently chairs the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) and the Malta ESG Alliance (MESGA).



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## **Ms Gabriella Borda**

**Climate Finance and Sustainability  
Advisor**

Gabriella is highly proficient in GHG Emissions Accounting and is actively championing sustainability practices across various sectors at both national and international levels, by providing support to different stakeholders in their sustainability journeys. Gabriella pursued further studies at the Berlin School of Economics & Law, specialising in Green Energy and Climate Finance. Additionally, she serves as a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta, delivering courses related to ESG. Gabriella is also the founder of ClimateDelta, a start-up specialising in climate-related advisory services and digital solutions. Furthermore, she holds a partnership position at Avvena, a French company specialising in green technology solutions.



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**Mr. Matthew Swain**  
Senior ESG Manager, APS Bank  
Plc.

Matthew Swain is the Senior ESG Manager at APS Bank Plc. Prior to this, Matthew spent 17 years in London working with a major global bank. He specialised in renewable energy lending for corporates, eventually managing and implementing global sustainability risk policies. He is experienced at assessing ESG impacts of large-scale financing projects as well as developing climate strategies for the banking sector.



## **Ms. Saskia Payne-Clark**

**Head of Corporate and International  
subsidiary Banking, HSBC Malta**

Saskia Payne-Clarke is the Head of Corporate and International Subsidiary Banking for HSBC in Malta. In her role, she is responsible for managing and growing both domestic and international customer relationships in Malta. Her team supports mid-market corporates and international subsidiaries across all sectors, providing a wide range of banking solutions which enable customers to thrive and achieve their aspirations.

Prior to this role, she was based in HSBC's Global Wholesale Credit and Lending team, following a number of years in Corporate Finance. Prior to moving to Malta in 2022, Saskia has enjoyed a range of challenging and unique roles across HSBC, also having spent time working and living in Bermuda and France.

Saskia graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics with French from the University of Nottingham in 2016. She is currently studying for the Chartered Banker's Certificate in Green and Sustainable Finance.



**Dr. Gordon Cordina**  
Chairman, BOV

Dr Gordon Cordina for several years had experiences within the Board and Risk Committees in major financial institutions in Malta, amongst which Bank of Valletta and HSBC Bank Malta. He served as Manager of the Research Department of the Central Bank of Malta, Director General of the National Statistics Office of Malta, Head of the Economics Department of the University of Malta, and Economic Advisor to the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development.

Currently Dr Gordona Cordina is the Chairman of Bank of Valletta, also Chairing its ESG Committee and chairing the Nominations and Remuneration Committee of same bank. Chairman of Mapfre MSV life and through the private consultancy firm which he co-founded in 2006, is involved in several local and international research projects and consultancy assignments with institutions including the EU Commission, NGO's and private sector entities. Also, a visiting senior lecturer at the University of Malta.



## Mr. Enrico Biele

Programme Manager, ENEA

Enrico Biele is a Programme Manager with about 15 years' experience in energy policy analysis, development, and implementation. Before joining the Italian Energy Agency ENEA, he worked as Programme executive for the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and as Principal policy officer for the Italian Federation for Energy Efficiency. His current activity focuses on energy policies, programmes and strategies for industry and enterprises, with particular emphasis on the SME business.

Since 2019 he chairs the Industry & Enterprises Working Group of the European Network of National Energy Agencies. Enrico holds a Master of Science in Energy Engineering and an MBA from the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management.



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# Session 2

## Decarbonisation solutions for industry



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***Moderator:***  
**Dr Marthese Portelli**  
CEO, The Malta Chamber

Dr Portelli is a law graduate from the University of Malta specialized in applied business law and IT. Throughout her 27 years of working experience she occupied several managerial posts and spearheaded nationwide projects within the public and the private sector. In 2013 she contested the general election successfully and was re-elected again in 2017, during which she shadowed challenging portfolios including EU affairs, energy, environment, transport, infrastructure, capital projects, planning and property. Following her departure from politics, she ventured into the sphere of sectoral representation while working as a management consultant in her professional capacity. Since 1st May 2021 she took on the role as CEO of The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise, and Industry. She is also a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta and sits on the Board of Directors of Malta Business Bureau (MBB), Education Malta and Tech.MT.



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## **Ing. Patrick Spiteri Staines**

**Head of Sustainability Corinthia Group**

Ing. Patrick Spiteri Staines obtained a Masters in Sustainable Energy at University of Malta in 2013. Registered as Energy Auditor with the MRA in 2015 with the possibility of providing Energy Audits to Companies according to LN196 of 2014. Certified as Building Energy Assessor with the BCA for the provision of Energy Performance Certificates for dwellings according to EPBD. Experienced in Building Energy audits, Green Materials, Energy efficient building services, extensive experience in project management of building finishes past construction stage to final completion, with special focus on energy related building performance, quality of building finishes, detailing of finishes and sustainable material. In depth knowledge of building materials, quality standards, work planning and scheduling with critical path analysis. 22 years of experience in business development in technology related sectors, ranging from infrastructure projects such as Sewage treatment plants and desalination plants to GPS surveying and GIS systems. Provision of Energy Efficiency solutions to Industry since 2014. Joined Corinthia Group as Head of Sustainability in Jan 2023.



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## **Ing. Paul Fenech**

**Director Engineering and  
Reliability, Crane Currency**

Ing. Paul Fenech is a Mechanical Engineer with over 25 years experience in manufacturing and service industries with a track record of developing and leading teams to deliver breakthrough results including multi-million-euro greenfield projects, process improvements and sustainable green innovation. A people developer, mentor, and advocate for sustainability.

Ing. Fenech is a certified energy auditor, EPC accessor of buildings (dwellings) and the first Maltese Passive House Designer and consultant. He currently holds the position of Director Engineering and Reliability at Crane Currency Malta, a pioneer in micro-optics technology providing a wide range of engaging visual effects that enhance the level of security and public trust in banknotes.



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## **Mr. Chris Vassallo Cesareo**

**President of The Malta Chamber**

Chris Vassallo Cesareo has sat on Council for the last 10 years and served as Deputy President for the last two years, during which he has been involved in setting up the Retail Businesses Section and the Furniture Manufacturing Businesses Section of The Malta Chamber. He was also actively working to support The Young Chamber Network within The Malta Chamber.

Chris Vassallo Cesareo obtained a BA (Hons) in Marketing and furthered his study at St John's College in Portsmouth and at Boston University, graduating in Marketing with a minor Psychology. He is the Managing Director of Domestica Ltd, a family-owned business that was set up in the 70s.



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## **Ms. Nadia Grech**

**Head of Sustainable Industrial Development  
Office, Malta Enterprise**

Nadia Grech has been engaged with Malta Enterprise for over 12 years and has worked in various departments comprising EU Projects, Operations Management as well as Business Development Management. She currently Heads the Sustainable Industrial Development Office with the aim of promoting Sustainability Schemes, while assisting companies to invest in projects that lower carbon emissions.



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Nikolaos Kontinakis works in the Energy Efficiency Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER). The mission of the Unit is to deliver on the Green Deal objective to prioritise energy efficiency by developing and implementing the necessary legislation and by supporting the mainstreaming of energy efficiency investments under the European Green Deal Investment Plan. Nikolaos works with the energy efficiency targets, the nexus between energy efficiency and ICT, particularly data centres, as well as the 'Energy Efficiency First' principle. For more than 20 years, he has worked for the development and implementation of policies and projects in the areas of the twin green & digital transition (energy, climate, and ICT), and the sustainable development of cities and regions.



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# Session 3

**Supporting decarbonisation –  
Presentations by Energy and Water Agency  
and University of Malta**



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## **Mr. Luke Farrugia**

**Officer, The Energy and Water Agency**

Luke Farrugia has been part of the Energy and Water agency for two years, where he contributes to the Stakeholder Support Unit. His primary focus lies within the running of the Research and Innovation scheme. Luke is currently reading for a master's degree in sustainable development and holds a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering.



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## **Ing. Charles Buttigieg**

**Chief Policy Officer, Stakeholder Support  
Unit, The Energy and Water Agency**

Charles Buttigieg is the Chief Policy Officer (Stakeholder Support) of the Energy and Water Agency. In this role, he coordinates a team of experts with responsibilities to interact and establish initiatives and schemes in order to drive consumers towards sustainable operation.

Charles Buttigieg is a graduate in Mechanical Engineering with a Masters Degree in Diplomatic Studies from the University of Malta. He has worked in various engineering posts at Enemalta Corporation and after joining the Malta Resource Authority formed part of the team that drafted the conditions for the energy market to be liberalised. He has been involved in the international aspects of the energy market since the mid-90's resulting in him being heavily involved in the drafting of local transposition of EU Directives, Codes of Practice, and the first Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for the Islands



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## **Mr. Kyle Abela**

**Senior Facilities Engineer,  
Baxter Malta**

Kyle Abela is a 27-year-old Senior Facilities Engineer at Baxter Malta, specializing in the Sustainability of Industrial Building Services. He acquired his Mechanical Engineering Degree from the University of Malta in 2018 by focusing on design and industrial manufacturing. His undergraduate dissertation involved designing and building a compressed air test bed to measure unsustainable waste in industrial compressed air systems. This led to a Master's degree in 2020, where he designed and built a real-time monitoring system to identify compressed air waste at its source. This research received numerous accolades and was published in several scientific publications. Kyle applied his expertise in compressed air and automation at a local industrial services provider before joining Baxter, where he expanded his focus of sustainability to all industrial building services. Within this role, Kyle was involved in several energy saving projects involving Compressed Air, HVAC systems and Chillers amongst



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## **Prof. Saviour Formosa**

**Department of Criminology, The  
University of Malta**

Professor Saviour Formosa is employed at the Department of Criminology at the University of Malta and consultant to various departments and entities. He was formerly Head of the Department from 2016-2020. He has a PhD in spatio-temporal environmental criminology, having acquired a MSc in GIS and a BA(Hons) in Sociology and a Diploma in Applied Social Sciences. His main area of research in social sciences relates to social wellbeing on safety and security, access to services and social inclusion across the age groups. Having worked in various fields such as the United Nations Institute on Ageing, the development planning agency, and the University of Malta, he serves as consultant to various Ministries and the public sector and public service on innovation, policy and intervention.

His expertise is based on spatio-temporal analysis of social and physical relationships using spatial information systems. His expertise lies in the implementation of cross-thematic approaches and uses to the data cycle and management with emphasis in the thematic and spatial data structures and their effect on wellbeing and inclusion, spatial analysis of social data, integrative and horizontal systems that are pivotal for social change.

Prof. Formosa has published extensively in various social and technological domains. He is currently involved in the creation of virtual and immersive worlds as an investigative tool for social interactionism as a potential future scenario construct analysis that would affect the different age cohorts and how they interact with the societal milieu.



## **Prof. Luciano Mulè Stagno**

**Director, The Institute for Sustainable Energy and  
Group Leader of the Solar Research Lab, The  
University of Malta**

Is the Director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy and Group Leader of the Solar Research Lab at the University of Malta. He holds a Ph.D in Physics from the Missouri University of Science and Technology. He returned to his native Malta in 2007 from the US where, after his PhD studies, he spent 12 years working with MEMC Electronic Materials (now Global Wafers, formerly SunEdison). His last post there was that of Director of Worldwide Labs with responsibility for labs in Asia, Europe, and the US. His major expertise is in the characterization, engineering and synthesis of semiconductor and solar materials. He has published extensively and holds 10 patents on semiconductor/solar materials.

His current research interests are in photovoltaics systems and materials and other renewable energy technologies that could be applicable to Malta. He led ERDF335 – the 4.2M Euro project to fund the solar research lab and Solaqua an ongoing project to study offshore solar energy and several other projects. Luciano has a passion for heritage and environmental issues. In fact, his first post in Malta was that of CEO of Heritage Malta (2007-2009) and he is currently Vice-president of Din L-Art Helwa (The National Trust of Malta). He is also Chairman of the COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) scientific committee and has served on the boards of several local companies.